

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested. Claims 2-9 and 11-12 are pending, Claims 1 and 10 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 11-12 having been amended by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action Claims 1, 2, 10 and 12 were indicated as containing informalities, Claims 1, 9 and 11 were rejected as being unpatentable over Namekata (U.S. Patent No. 5,673,294) and in further view of Nagayasu et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,269,124); Claim 2 was indicated as being allowed and Claims 3-8 and 10 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the identification of allowable subject matter. In reply, the informalities regarding Claim 1 are moot because Claim 1 is cancelled, and the informalities regarding Claims 2, 10 (now incorporated into Claim 9) and 12 have been addressed.

In view of the indication of allowable subject matter, Claim 2 has been amended as requested, and therefore dependent Claims 3-8, which depend from amended Claim 2, are also believed to be allowable.

The allowable subject matter of Claim 10 has been incorporated into Claim 9, and therefore, Claim 9 is now believed to be allowable, as well as Claims 11 and 12 which depend from Claim 9.

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Consequently, in view of the indication of allowable subject matter, and the present amendment, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 2-9 and 11-12, as amended, are in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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